

Remarks

The Office Action of August 16, 2007 by Examiner Vanaman has been carefully reviewed by the undersigned attorney.

Amended Claim 1

Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate subject matter and concepts from dependent claims 2, 3, and 5-7. Claim 1 as amended herein is allowable.

In the mower of this invention, the display warns the user when the state of charge of the battery reaches a low level that is above a predetermined minimum level, i.e. when the yellow warning indicator 82y is lit. This permits the user to take corrective action if the user so wishes. If the user ignores this warning and continues to operate the mower, the lock out feature described at the end of the second full paragraph of page 13 will be activated when the predetermined minimum state of charge is reached. This lock out feature disables or prohibits operation of the mower. Both the warning indicator and lock out feature are now set forth in limitations f(vi) and f(vii) of claim 1.

Once the lock out feature is activated, the user must restart the internal combustion engine and leave the all battery mode of operation. If it is not proper to do so when the lock out feature is active, i.e. the mower is being operated in a noise restricted zone or during a noise restricted time of day, the user can wait until the noise restrictions pass before starting the engine. Thus, the noise restrictions will not be violated. The user maintains control in restarting the engine.

There is nothing in the references that teach the combination of elements set forth in claim 1. In Arendt, the

engine restarts automatically whenever the battery state of charge reaches the predetermined minimum level. The operator has no control over this restarting and the engine could restart at any time, thereby violating applicable noise restrictions. If the manual shut off switch is thrown, there is no similar lock out feature in Arendt that automatically prevents operation of the motors when the predetermined minimum level is reached.

Thus, even if one takes the combination of references used by the Examiner, this still does not teach or suggest the limitations of claim 1 as amended. Thus, claim 1 and its dependent claims are allowable.

Claim 24 and Amended Claim 25

The Examiner's rejection of claim 24 is respectfully traversed. It would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the mower art to have used the manual shut off switch of Arendt in a mower. In fact, the Reimers and Lamb references used by the Examiner in the claim rejections are evidence of the non-obviousness of claim 24.

The Reimers and Lamb patents are owned by the same assignee, Ransomes America. In the Lamb patent, Ransomes first discloses an all electric drive mower for quiet operation. Later, Ransomes discloses a hybrid mower in Reimers. Yet, while obviously being aware of the need for quiet operation as evidenced by its earlier Lamb patent, it was not obvious to Ransomes to provide the hybrid system in Reimers with an all battery mode of operation using a switch to shut off the internal combustion engine. Instead, Ransomes had two entirely different machines, a quiet all battery machine and a noisy hybrid machine. This evidence of what those skilled in the mower art actually did is highly probative of non-obviousness.

Accordingly, there is no indication that those in the mower art would have considered the use of the manual shut off switch in Arendt as an obvious thing to incorporate in mowers. The mower prior art actually teaches away from this with the entirely separate mowers of Reimers and Lamb. Accordingly, claim 24 is allowable.

Claim 25 has been amended to clear up any ambiguity or uncertainty as to what is being claimed and to be consistent with the specification. When the all battery mode selection switch is thrown, the internal combustion engine is shut off and the electric power generating device is simply not rotated as a result of the engine shut down. No electrical changes are made with respect to the electric power generating device. Specifically, the windings of the electric power generating device are not reconnected or reconfigured so that the device then serves as a starter motor. This is what happens in Arendt.

Accordingly, claim 25 as amended herein is further allowable over Arendt. In Arendt, the generator has a series winding 3 and a resistance 3a that permit the generator to act as the starting motor when the engine is off, but which are short circuited when the engine is running to permit the generator to act as a generator. See Page 1 of Arendt, Line 96 - Page 2, Line 3. This does not meet the requirement of amended claim 25 of:

"the all battery mode switch placement not converting the electric power generating device into a motor that can be used to restart the internal combustion engine." (Emphasis Added)

Amended Claim 33

Claim 33 has been amended to recite the fact that the current draw indicators for the cutting units are arranged

on the display in a configuration that mimics the ganged configuration of the cutting units on the mower frame from the point of view of the user. This was disclosed in the specification in the first full paragraph on page 15. Such a "mimic" orientation is not disclosed or suggested in any of the prior art of record. Accordingly, claim 33 and its dependent claim 34 are further allowable.

New Claim 35

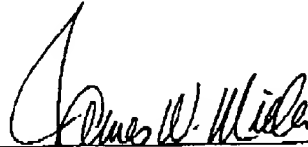
New claim 35 is drawn to the use of the all battery mode selection switch as a trigger for automatically loosening the reel to bedknife adjustments on the reel cutting units when the switch is thrown to go into the all battery mode. This feature is described in the last full paragraph of page 15 of the specification. In some cutting situations, this loosening can be effectively used without changing the quality of cut in an unacceptable manner. Such reel to bedknife loosening would prolong battery life.

No references of record teach or suggest the subject matter of new claim 35. Accordingly, new claim 35 is allowable.

Summary

The claims remaining in this application are allowable over the prior art. Accordingly, allowance of this application and passage to issue are respectfully requested.

Respectfully presented,



February 19, 2008

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